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Here's How  
to check your hazards



EXTENSION SERVICE  
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(Suggested letter for distribution of check sheets to State and county extension staff. With slight changes the county agents may use this letter to distribute the check sheets to the leaders.)

TO EXTENSION WORKERS:

Subject: Emergency Rural Fire Control Check Sheets.

This material is a suggested guide for checking farm and other rural fire hazards. It is part of the Emergency Rural Fire Control Program.

The statements on the check sheets are directed to the farm family. They should be used by each family on farms and in other rural homes to check all fire hazards. The check list should be posted by the family as a reminder of hazards to be removed.

There are five check sheets covering the home, the farm buildings, the fields, the farm woodlands, and the fire-fighting equipment. This order of grouping is for your convenience and for the convenience of the farm family. The check sheet concerning homes may be used in checking all homes, whether they are on the farms, in villages or in other rural areas; those concerning farm buildings, fields, farm woodlands and fire-fighting equipment may apply to some rural nonfarm conditions, although they are intended primarily for farm use.

The items on the check sheets are general. They should be changed to fit your needs by reducing the number of items to be checked, by striking out those not applicable to your conditions, and by adding others that may be necessary.

The neighborhood-leader system may be used effectively in reaching every rural family. Leaders can give out and explain the check sheets, aid in the development of community fire-control groups, and assist in the educational work. The check sheets may be used as a basis for group discussion in both adult and 4-H Club meetings.

KEEP POSTED UNTIL FIRE HAZARDS ARE REMOVED

TO RURAL FAMILIES:

Check Sheets for Rural Fire Hazards

Fire prevention is one of the most serious problems in the Nation. The war has created new dangers of fire. Farm buildings, fields and forests, and other rural property may be burned by fires caused by bombs and sabotage. These new dangers from fire are in addition to the old dangers such as lightning, bad chimneys, spontaneous combustion, gasoline, kerosene, engines, and carelessness.

Rural fires kill about 3,500 people a year, and they destroy property valued at about \$225,000,000. This amounts to approximately twice the loss in all cities. The farm loss averages about \$16 a year for each farm family in the Nation. Losses may become many times this large if fire hazards are neglected. Building materials are scarce in wartime, and it is now difficult to replace the buildings destroyed by fire.

The prevention of fire is necessary to safeguard farm income, equipment, and supplies. When you practice fire prevention and fire control you are not only helping yourself, but you are helping the Nation to win the war. The Nation needs your help in preventing and fighting fires.

The attached check sheets are furnished for your use in checking your home, buildings, fields and woodland, and your fire-fighting equipment. A check mark (✓) should be placed in the blank following each item inspected if there is no hazard. If a hazard is found, the space on the check sheet should remain blank until the hazard is removed. The check sheets should be posted and kept as a reminder of the fire hazards you have and as a record of the hazards you remove.

Return this stub through your neighborhood leader

- .....
- I have checked our family's fire hazards \_\_\_\_\_
  - I need the additional information as listed on the back of this stub \_\_\_\_\_
  - Name \_\_\_\_\_
  - Address \_\_\_\_\_
  - .....

A Check Sheet--To Prevent Fire in the Rural Home  
(A guide for our use in checking our fire  
prevention problems and conditions)

Check here

1. We are keeping matches in safe match boxes, out of reach of small children. \_\_\_\_\_
2. We never smoke in bed. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Gasoline and kerosene supplies are kept in closed cans and stored safely 75 feet or more from the house. \_\_\_\_\_
4. We are careful in starting fires in stoves, furnace, and fireplaces. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Hot ashes are handled carefully and cooled in metal containers before they are dumped where they might start a fire. \_\_\_\_\_
6. We keep our closets, basements, and attic free from loose or piled paper, old clothes, and other material that might be a fire hazard. \_\_\_\_\_
7. We keep our flues clean and repair or replace cracked chimneys or flues before they can cause a fire. \_\_\_\_\_
8. We inspect our stove and furnace pipes frequently, install new pipes where they are needed, and make sure that they are properly supported. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Safety screens are used with open fireplaces and grates. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Our lamps, lanterns, candles, or other lighting equipment, are kept clean and used carefully. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Our electric wiring is installed in accord with the National Electrical Code. \_\_\_\_\_
12. We use fuses or circuit breakers of the proper size in all our electric wiring. \_\_\_\_\_
13. We keep our extension cords in good condition. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Permanent wiring and suitable outlets are provided for plugging in electric appliances. \_\_\_\_\_
15. We keep in good condition and properly grounded to moist earth, lightning rods, metal roofs, radio aerials, telephone, and permanently installed electric appliances. \_\_\_\_\_

Check here

16. We keep our house and yard free of leaves, dead grass, and trash that might cause or spread a fire. \_\_\_\_\_
17. We inspect our roofs frequently, and keep them free from leaves, moss, and other material that might be ignited from a spark. \_\_\_\_\_
18. We are prepared to fight fire. \_\_\_\_\_

(For family use only. Not to be collected by anyone.)

A Check Sheet--To Prevent Fire in Farm Buildings  
(A guide for our use in checking our fire  
prevention problems and conditions)

Check here

1. We do not smoke or permit smoking in the barn or in other buildings where there is danger of fire.
2. We are careful in the use of lanterns, and provide permanent hooks for hanging them where they may not be broken or turned over.
3. We have checked the electric wiring in the barn and other service buildings and made all repairs necessary to prevent the starting of fires.
4. Our electric motors and appliances are kept clean and in good repair and operated with approved cords attached to proper outlets -- never attached to drop-cord light outlets.
5. Our tractor, truck, automobile and engines are operated and housed in buildings located safe distances from the barn.
6. All tractors, and steam, gasoline, kerosene, or Diesel engines are checked for properly equipped mufflers or spark arrestors before they are used for work such as threshing, silo filling, and feed grinding.
7. We have safe storage for gasoline, kerosene, oil, grease, nitrate fertilizer, dynamite, and other explosive or inflammable supplies.
8. We have protected the barn and principal service buildings against the unnecessary hazards of lightning by providing and maintaining proper grounds for all lightning rods, metal roofs, roof drains, downspouts, hay-carrier tracks, windmills, and water-tank towers.
9. We cure all hay thoroughly before it is stored in the barn, and repair promptly small leaks in the barn roof to prevent the heating of hay or other stored produce that could cause a fire.
10. All service buildings such as tobacco barns, sweet-potato curing houses, brooder houses, smokehouses, wash houses, dairies, and the farm shop, in which fire is used for heating or other purposes, are equipped with safe heating equipment and flues to prevent the burning of the building itself and the destruction of other buildings.

Check here

11. We keep clean all corners of buildings, harness rooms, garages, tractor sheds and engine rooms that otherwise would collect burlap, rags, and other waste.
12. We have cleaned up our farmstead by removing from the sides of buildings and fences all straw, weeds, dry leaves, brush, old lumber, and other unnecessary material that might catch fire easily and cause a fire to spread.
13. We have provided a trash burner for safety and convenience in burning waste materials.
14. We are prepared to fight fire.
15. Our fire-fighting equipment such as ladders, buckets, pumps, hose, fire extinguishers, and fire alarm are kept in good condition and in convenient locations to use in any emergency.
16. We are cooperating with our neighbors in organizing an efficient fire-fighting group.

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KEEP POSTED UNTIL THE FIRE HAZARDS ARE REMOVED

A Check Sheet--To Prevent Fire in the Fields  
(A guide for our use in checking our fire prevention problems)

Check here

1. Workmen and others are cautioned against smoking and the use of matches in dry fields of grain and grass or in other places where property could be damaged.
2. We manage our fields, fence rows, hedge rows, lanes, roadsides, ditch banks, and levees to prevent their becoming fire hazards.
3. We bury discarded bottles and broken glass.
4. If it is necessary to burn brush, weeds, trash, and old stalks, we do this on calm days when the ground is moist, according to State fire laws and the suggestions of the fire warden.
5. Our tractors, trucks, and other engines and those we hire are kept in good operating condition and equipped with safe exhausts, mufflers, fuel lines and tanks before they are used where they could start a fire.
6. Our tractors, engines, and other high-speed machinery such as combines, threshers, huskers and shredders are kept clean and free of accumulations of oil, grease, dust, and chaff.
7. We use closed cans or drums for hauling gasoline and oil to the field, and shade them from the sun.
8. We equip our tractors, trucks, combines, threshers, and balers with proper fire extinguishers, and require that our custom operators have proper fire extinguishers on their equipment.
9. Steam engines must be properly equipped with good stacks and spark arrestors before they are used on our farm; and they must be operated safely by keeping them 50 feet or more from stacked hay, grain, and straw, and by firing and disposing of ashes carefully.
10. We rotate crops in fields or in strips to keep ripe, dry crops separated from each other by green crops or fallow land.
11. Large fields of grain or other crops that might burn are protected with firebreaks.

Check here

12. We have plowed, planted, seeded, or otherwise maintain fire breaks around the farmstead and stacks of hay or grain.
13. We provide or maintain for fire-fighting, roads or trails to streams, lakes, ponds, cisterns, wells, or other sources of water.
14. We keep ready for use in fighting fire our trucks, tractors, teams, power pumps, sprayers, plows, harrows, graders, mowers, hay rakes, and other suitable equipment.
15. We keep ready for instant use in fighting fire, barrels of water, buckets, shovels, rakes, hoes, axes, scythes, sacks, and other suitable tools.
16. We are cooperating with our neighbors in organizing fire patrols when necessary, and community fire-fighting groups.
17. We report fire hazards on abandoned farms or neglected areas to the county agent, the local fire leader, and fire warden.

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A Check Sheet--To Prevent Fire in Farm Woodlands

(A guide for our use in checking our fire prevention problems and conditions)

Check here

1. We keep a constant watch for fires and report them to the local fire leader, the fire warden, or other proper official.
2. We construct and maintain fire lines or breaks through and around large woodlands so as to divide them into smaller areas.
3. During very dry weather we try to keep out all hunters and trespassers; and if it is necessary for cattlemen or loggers to go in the woods, we tell them what they shall do to protect the woodlands from fire.
4. We caution workmen, campers, hunters, fishermen, and others against smoking and the use of fire where the woods are dry.
5. We clean up the woods after cutting timber or if it is desirable to burn a heavy slash after logging, we consult our local fire warden and burn during a damp period when there is little danger of the fire spreading to other areas.
6. We report to the local fire warden or to the State forestry department, roadside slash and debris that are dangerous to adjoining woodlands.
7. We call the attention of people building warming fires to the danger of burning the timber, and when we find unattended fires we take every precaution to see that they do not escape.
8. In case of heavy windfalls or timber trees killed by fire or insects, we use suitable trees for products, cut snags to remove danger from lightning, and clean up the area to prevent fire.
9. We clean up fence rows and strips of land bordering woodlands by cutting weeds and grass, and disposing of trash.
10. We do not burn grass areas, fields, and brier patches during dry periods, but wait for damp periods of low fire risk and then only in compliance with the State fire laws.

Check here

11. When waste material, such as boxes, paper, and trash accumulate around villages and dumps and become fire hazards to woodland, we report such conditions to the town officials and to the representatives of the State forestry department.
12. We prevent our camp and picnic grounds from becoming fire hazards by visiting them frequently and keeping them clean; by posting fire-prevention signs; by establishing fire lines if necessary; and by closing the areas to the public during unusually dry periods.
13. We have on hand equipment for fighting woods fires as an ax, saw, shovel, rake, and a container for water.
14. We have discussed the fire situation with our neighbors, and have agreed to call each other for assistance in case of a fire which cannot be handled with the help on the farm.
15. We have read the State fire laws and discussed them with our local fire warden, and have developed plans with him for the protection of our farm woodland and the adjoining woodland of our neighbors.

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A Check Sheet--Farm Fire Fighting Equipment

(A guide for our use in checking our equipment for fighting fire in farm buildings, fields, and woods)

Check here

1. We are equipped to fight fire in our buildings, fields, and woodlands.

2. Our house, barn, and other principal buildings are equipped with properly charged chemical fire extinguishers.

3. We catch rain water in barrels or drums, and keep at least two barrels full, ready for fighting fire.

4. We keep at least one waterbucket in each of the water barrels ready for instant use in fighting fire.

5. We keep handy, burlap bags, buckets of sand, soil, or other material suitable for smothering fire.

6. We have ladders for reaching the roofs of all buildings.

7. We have ladders or securely attached ropes for escaping from the second story if trapped by fire.

8. We keep our axes, saws, picks, shovels, sand buckets, waterbuckets, washtubs, and boilers located conveniently for fighting fire.

9. We have suitable fire extinguishers for use on trucks, tractors, engines, and other machinery with high-speed parts.

10. We keep our fire extinguishers, knapsack sprayers, and foot pumps in condition for use in fighting fire.

11. Our main water supply for fighting fire is a stream, lake, spring, pond, reservoir, shallow well, or cistern which keeps at least 3,000 gallons of water ready for use by a fire engine.

12. We have running water with convenient taps, faucets, or hydrants.

13. Our pressure water system will supply at least 200 gallons an hour with pressure to reach the roof of the tallest building.

Check here

14. Our power pump is housed in a separate building, away from the house and barn, and will continue to operate even though one or more of the other buildings should burn.
15. We keep our portable irrigation pump, engine, pipe, and hose in condition for emergency use in fighting fire.
16. We keep our power sprayers convenient and in operating condition for use in fighting fire, and we keep emergency repair supplies for all hose.
17. We keep our trucks, teams, tractors, plows, graders, shovels, rakes, hoes, and other suitable equipment ready for use in fighting fires in fields.
18. For fighting woods fires, we have in convenient locations an ax, hoe, rake, long-handled shovel, fire swatter, and a container for drinking water. We also have a team and a plow for use in making fire lines.
19. All members of the family and all farm workers are familiar with our fire-fighting plan, the location of water and equipment, and the responsibility of each person.
20. We have telephone, bell, or other suitable equipment for signalling neighbors and calling the fire company.
21. Our neighbors know our fire-fighting plan, the location of water supplies, pumps, buckets, ladders, and other equipment, and the equipment they should bring with them.
22. We have contacted our nearest fire company and furnished the firemen with a plat of our farmstead showing the location and amount of water available, the size and location of buildings, and a list of our fire-fighting equipment.
23. Our doors, gates, and lot fences are so arranged that livestock can be driven quickly from burning buildings and penned in a safe lot away from the fire.

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